

OPEN LETTER TO THE GOVERNOR - I'M HOPING THAT
OTHER PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY DO THE SAME
PLEASE E-MAIL GOVERNOR DEVAL PATRICK

November 14, 2014

Governor Deval Patrick
Massachusetts State House
Room 105
Boston, MA 02133

www.mass.gov/governor

Luis D. Perez
W33937

P.S. "GREETINGS FOR THANKSGIVING"

RE: PETITION FOR LUIS D. PEREZ, W33937

Dear Governor Patrick:

I am a registered Democrat who was a long-term resident of Massachusetts who is now living in Florida, the land of warmth and sunshine but also the land of rabidly conservative Republicans who espouse the death penalty, who freed Andrew Zimmerman after his brutal murder of an innocent Black youth, and who elected a governor like Rick Scott not once, but twice - in other words, living in a state that is an embarrassment to all people with a conscience! I have not, nor will I ever, lose my sense of fairness and my belief that many people can change and thus deserve a second chance. It is this belief that prompts me to write in support of Luis Perez's plea for commutation of his life sentence.

I have known Luis for 28 years and I know him well. He is now 63 years old and has been incarcerated for a crime committed over 40 years ago, sentenced to life without parole when he was a young immigrant from Cuba who spoke no English. A person of his youth and lack of English-speaking skills, facing no hope of release from prison, would normally have spent these last 40-some years playing cards, building muscle, talking smack, and basically doing very little that is productive with his life. But Luis D. Perez is no ordinary inmate of the Massachusetts Correctional System. He has taught himself English and several other languages, he has always been actively involved on a peaceful basis with prison issues, often writing voluminous commentaries on the need for prison reform, and he has spent the last 28 years trying to work with young people, to show them the importance of the decisions they make as youth and the consequences of poor decisions. His disciplinary record is almost negligible, which is amazing considering the number of years that he has been incarcerated.

I was a guidance counselor in the Gardner Public Schools and it was in that capacity that I met Luis. He was the co-founder of an excellent decision-making program, Project Wake-Up, which was approved and endorsed by then-Superintendent James Bender. I was a volunteer with this program for many years, working closely with Luis and several other inmates. I retired in 2000 but have maintained contact with Luis all of these years. I respect him greatly for the way that he has changed and lived his life and I admire him for his constant positive outlook. Normally a person with this many years of incarceration would be expected to have a difficult time adjusting to a life of freedom, but I do not anticipate this problem with Luis. He has maintained close ties with family and with the Latino community in the Fitchburg-Leominster area. He is an ordained minister in a Christian church, and I would expect that he would do a great deal of good in the Latino community if released from prison. Please give this good man a second chance at life.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter. I appreciate all that you have done for the people of Massachusetts and I wish you well in whatever your next endeavor may be.

Sincerely,

Michele M. D'Acri

(Mrs.) Michele M. D'Acri

Copy to: Luis D. Perez, NCCI, Gardner, Massachusetts